



中華人民共和國香港特別行政區政府總部教育局
Education Bureau
Government Secretariat, Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
The People's Republic of China

本局檔案 Our Ref.: EDB(EI)/HEA/1/1/(8)

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8 May 2019

Ms Angel WONG
Clerk to Panel
Legislative Council Panel on Education
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central, Hong Kong

Dear Ms WONG,

Panel on Education
Follow-up to the meeting on 3 May 2019

We refer to your letter dated 7 May 2019. With regard to the two motions passed under the agenda item "Payment for the examination fees for school candidates sitting for the 2020 Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination" at the meeting on 3 May 2019, our response is at the Annex.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Wendy AU".

(Ms Wendy AU)
for Secretary for Education

Encl.

**Response from Education Bureau
to the motions passed under the agenda item
"Payment for the examination fees for school candidates sitting for the
2020 Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination"
at the meeting of the Panel on Education on 3 May 2019**

Wording of the Motion (Moved by Hon Starry LEE Wai-king)

This Panel urges the Government to make the examination fee payment arrangement for school candidates sitting for the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination a recurrent measure.

Response

The Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA) is an independent statutory body set up in accordance with the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority Ordinance (Cap. 261) (the Ordinance). The Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination (HKDSE) fees charged according to the Ordinance is a major source of income of the HKEAA. In 2017/18, the income related to the HKDSE accounted for about 52% of the HKEAA's income, while that related to international and professional examinations as well as other local examinations contributed to the remaining share of the income. The current mode of operation and cost structure of the HKEAA cannot support the long-term operation of the HKDSE, resulting in financial difficulties faced by the HKEAA. In 2017/18, the HKDSE recorded a deficit of about \$69.2 million, leading to an overall deficit of about \$10.1 million for the HKEAA, partly offset by the surplus derived from other income. As the candidature for HKDSE is expected to stay on a declining trend in the coming years, the financial position of the HKEAA will continue to deteriorate.

The HKEAA is working out a proposal to ensure its long-term financial sustainability in consultation with the Government. A concrete plan is yet to be formulated. The proposal to support the operation of HKDSE with the provision of recurrent funding from the Government involves a number of important and complicated policy issues, which requires careful

consideration. As a tide-over measure pending the comprehensive review, the Government will provide the HKEAA with a non-recurrent funding of no more than \$360.8 million in 4 years to support its effective operation during the period.

The HKEAA and the Government envisage that the detailed study will take time to complete. Views of Members of relevant Legislative Council committees and stakeholders will be sought and carefully considered in the process to ensure that the recommended way forward can support HKEAA's effective operation in the long run.

Wording of the Motion (Moved by Hon SHIU Ka-chun)

At present, the Government's initiative to pay the examination fee for school candidates sitting for the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination ("HKDSE") only applies to school candidates and school repeaters, while private candidates are excluded. Given the rising initial and examination fees of HKDSE in recent years, private candidates are not only ineligible for the examination fee payment arrangement, but also required to pay higher fees. This Panel urges the Education Bureau to provide an additional examination fee subsidy to the private candidates who enter for HKDSE again within one year after they have taken the examination for the first time, so as to alleviate the financial burden of the students.

Response

The Financial Secretary proposed to pay the examination fees for candidates sitting for the 2019 and 2020 HKDSE in the 2018-19 Budget and 2019-20 Budget respectively to share the fruits with citizens and as a relief measure.

In deciding to set the scope of application of the measure to school candidates only (including first-time candidates and repeaters in day schools and evening schools), the prime principle is the interests of candidates sitting for the HKDSE Examination. We note that there are divergent views in the community as to whether private students should be covered in the scope of application of this measure. There are views that extending the scope to

cover private candidates may attract some non-school candidates who originally have no plan to retake the exam, or even abusive use. For the 2020 HKDSE, we consider that it is appropriate to follow the successful experience of the 2019 HKDSE by confining the scope of application to school candidates only. It can help provide a stable examination environment and relieve the worries and pressure among candidates and parents, in the interests of the candidates as a whole.